

Inspection of Pennington C of E School

Pennington, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 0RR

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in September 2006 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 14 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff have high expectations for every pupil. The mission statement sits at the heart of the school. Leaders ensure that pupils appreciate that they are each different and capable of great things. Pupils' attendance remains strong because they enjoy coming to school.

Pupils behave well. They listen to their teachers and conduct themselves well. Those that we spoke to said that they look out for each other. They said that sometimes they can be silly when playing outside. Pupils said that bullying and name-calling are rare. They said that adults deal with these issues quickly so that they are not repeated.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are aware of the dangers of using the internet and social media. Pupils enjoy taking part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include a range of sports and arts-based clubs. Each day, pupils take part in the 'Pennington Paces'. This is a run around school. Older pupils support younger pupils and model good behaviour. They know it is important to stay fit and healthy.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Those that we spoke to said that leaders and staff go above and beyond to respond to their concerns.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The planned curriculum is ambitious. It is sequenced well. It helps pupils to build on what they already know. Leaders have adopted a structured approach to the teaching of reading and mathematics. They now follow the agreed policies and curriculum. Before the appointment of the headteacher in 2017 this was not happening consistently. Leaders are now making better checks on the delivery of the curriculum.

Governors are involved in the life of the school. They visit regularly so that they better understand how well pupils achieve. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Pupils who left Year 6 in 2019 achieved better in writing than they did in reading and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. Teachers plan lessons well. They help pupils revise and recall prior learning. Children in the early years apply their mathematics skills across the curriculum. They fit large crates together to construct houses and stages. They develop their communication and social skills alongside their mathematics. They write lists and collect data. As pupils progress through school they develop a secure understanding of multiplication facts. Older pupils consider how to find the area of different triangles.

In science and history, pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. Teachers use a range of source materials to bring history to life for the pupils. In science, pupils develop enquiry skills. They ask sensible questions about the world around them. Younger pupils consider what bulbs need to grow. Older pupils explore how the heart pumps blood around the body.

Leaders promote reading well. Pupils enjoy reading. They choose their books from the wide range of texts available. Teachers have a structured approach to reading. They balance the need to develop pupils' comprehension skills alongside reading fluency. Pupils have a good knowledge of a wide range of genres and authors. They apply their reading skills well across the curriculum.

Teachers are experts in the delivery of high-quality phonics sessions. Phonics is taught systematically. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 achieve well. Those who struggle receive good-quality support to help them catch up. Children take home books that help them practise what they have been learning in class. This helps to develop their reading fluency. Others take home games and activities to play with their families to help them read better. Children in the early years apply their phonics knowledge to a wide range of activities. This helps them to access the full curriculum. Children who leave the early years are prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have provided pupils with many opportunities to develop personally. Pupils engage in a wide range of charity work. They hold regular coffee mornings for the parish community. There are many close links with local industries. Pupils learn what it is like to be a scientist or an engineer. They consider the jobs they would like to do when they are older. Many pupils take on a wide range of additional responsibilities. Older pupils enjoy being buddies for the children in early years. Through philosophy lessons, pupils explore challenging concepts such as war. Opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures are not as well developed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff have received regular safeguarding training. Staff are aware of their responsibilities. They remain alert to possible signs of neglect and abuse. They know how to record concerns. Since the previous inspection, school leaders, with support from the local authority, have raised the awareness of safe parking.

School leaders work in close partnership with a number of external agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Through the curriculum, pupils are taught about how to stay safe while using the internet. Regular visits from the community police ensure that pupils are kept well informed about road safety and the dangers of speaking to strangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The new structured approach to the teaching of reading and mathematics is becoming more embedded. Leaders should continue with this approach so that pupils continue to develop their knowledge and skills and are better prepared for key stage 3.
- Leaders should ensure that they make checks on how well any planned improvements have been implemented. Doing so will ensure that the curriculum continues to be delivered in line with agreed policies.
- Leaders have provided pupils with many opportunities to develop personally. Leaders should ensure that they deepen pupils' experiences of learning about other faiths and cultures. Doing so will better prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	112284
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10110865
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Elisabeth Fenwick
Headteacher	Helen Storey
Website	www.penn.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 September 2006

Information about this school

- The headteacher is new to post since the previous inspection.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The majority of staff have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school had a section 48 inspection in November 2017.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in September 2006 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 14 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- We met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- We met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- We met with a representative of the local authority.
- We spoke with parents to gather their views about the school. We considered the 27 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. We considered the five emails we received from parents.
- We spoke with pupils about behaviour and safeguarding.
- We observed pupils arrive at school. We observed their behaviour in class, at playtimes and as they moved around school.
- We spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- We examined a range of school documentation. This included the school development plan and the leaders' evaluation of the effectiveness of the school. We looked at documentation in relation to planning for school improvement.
- We scrutinised the school's approach to safeguarding. We examined the single central record and records of safe recruitment. We spoke to staff to check how aware they are of their duties to safeguard pupils.
- We considered reading, mathematics, science and history as part of the inspection. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke to pupils about their learning. We spoke with teachers and scrutinised pupils' work with subject leaders. We listened to pupils read and spoke to them about their reading habits. We checked how well children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 applied their knowledge of phonics to their reading.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nick Capron

Ofsted Inspector

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